

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LISBON 03974 141934Z

44

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01

IO-10 ACDA-05 SAJ-01 OMB-01 /076 W

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P R 141832Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3422

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 3974

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJ: POLITICAL TENSIONS REMAIN HIGH

REF: (A) LISBON 3937; (B) LISBON 3972; (C) LISBON 3951

SUMMARY: REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL (RC) POLITICAL COMMITTEE, APPEARING ON TV DISCUSSION PROGRAM JULY 13, SOUGHT TO REASSURE PUBLIC RE AFM INTENTIONS IN MOVING TO ESTABLISH "DIRECT LINKS" WITH PEOPLE. COMMUNIST-DOMINATED LISBON PRESS HAS CRITICIZED DEFENSIVE POSTURE OF POLITICAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS. LEFT-LEANING MEDIA HAS GIVEN PREDICTABLE COLORED INTERPRETATIONS TO CONTINUING WEST EUROPEAN REACTION SUPPORTIVE OF PS DEPARTURE FROM GOVERNMENT. COPCON ISSUED STATEMENT JULY 14 COMMENTING ON ESCAPE OF MRPP LEADER MATOS FROM MILITARY HOSPITAL. CROWD OF SEVERAL HUNDRED SACKED PCP AND FELLOW-TRAVELLING FSP OFFICES IN CITY NORTH OF  
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PAGE 02 LISBON 03974 141934Z

LISBON. SAME DAY LARGER CROWD PARADED THROUGH AVEIVO

IN SUPPORT OF BISHOP AND CHURCH POSITION IN RADIO RENASCENSA CASE. TENSIONS CONTINUE HIGH WITH PPD EXPECTED TO LEAVE GOVERNMENT ON JULY 16, ANGOLA SITUATION DETERIORATING RAPIDLY, AND AFM ASSEMBLY SCHEDULED FOR JULY 15 NOW POSTPONED TO JULY 18. END SUMMARY

1. FOUR MEMBERS OF RC'S POLITICAL COMMITTEE (VICTOR CRESPO, VASCO LOURENCO, SOUSA E CASTRO, AND GRACA CUNHA) SPOKE TO NATION ON EVENING TV DISCUSSION JULY 13. IN EARNEST, WELL-MEANING TONES GROUP SOUGHT TO REASSURE PUBLIC THAT ARMED FORCES MOVEMENT (AFM) IS NEITHER ABOUT TO IMPOSE DICTATORSHIP NOR PERMIT ONE TO BE IMPOSED ON PORTUGUESE PEOPLE. FOURSOME DISCUSSED AFM'S PLAN FOR REINFORCING "DIRECT LINKS" WITH PEOPLE (REF B). PLAN, ACCORDING TO LINE, HAS BEEN DISTORTED BY PRESS INTO APPEARING TO BE SOMETHING TOTALLY NEW, A RADICAL SOLUTION TO BE IMPOSED IMMEDIATELY. NOT SO, THEY SAID. PLAN MERELY RECOGNIZES CURRENT STAGE OF AFM/PEOPLE ALLIANCE AND OUTLINES GENERAL AND EXPERIMENTAL PLAN FOR POLITICAL PARTICIPATION BY PORTUGUESE PEOPLE OVER NEXT TWO OR THREE DECADES. HOW FAST IT GOES AND ITS PRECISE FORM WILL DEPEND ON WILL OF THE PEOPLE. PCP-DOMINATED LISBON PAPERS CRITICIZED THE FOURSOME FOR BEING, INTER ALIA, "DEFENSIVE."

2. FOREIGN REACTION: LEFT-LEANING PRESS AND MEDIA HAVE GIVEN AMPLE, IF PREDICTABLY COLORED, COVERAGE TO REPORTS OF WEST EUROPEAN REACTION TO SOCIALIST DEPARTURE FROM GOVERNMENT. NEWS THAT CDU IS CALLING FOR FRG TO END ALL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS TO PORTUGAL MADE FRONT PAGE OF "DIARIO DE NOTICIAS," LISBON'S LARGEST PAPER. PRESS AND MEDIA ALSO NOTED LINEUP OF ITALIAN AND SPANISH COMMUNIST PARTIES WITH "EUROPEAN RIGHT."

3. INTERNAL REACTION - TWO INCIDENTS: PHYSICAL ATTACKS ON POLITICAL PARTY OFFICES HAVE BEEN FREQUENT OCCURRENCES IN RECENT MONTHS, ALTHOUGH VICTIMS HAVE ALMOST ALWAYS BEEN CDS, CHRISTIAN DEMS, AND PPD. ON JULY 18 A NON-LEFTIST CROWD OF APPROXIMATELY 200 RANSACKED PRTY HEADQUARTERS OF COMMUNISTS (PCP) AND FELLOW-TRAVELLING SOCIALIST POPULAR FRONT (FSP) IN RIO MAIOR (40 MILES NORTH OF LISBON). ON SAME DAY SOME 8,000 DEMONSTRATORS PARADED THROUGH AVEIRO, AN INDUSTRIAL TOWN HALFWAY BETWEEN OPORTO AND COIMBRA, CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 LISBON 03974 141934Z

RALLYING AROUND LOCAL BISHOP (WHO IS ALSO PRESIDENT OF METROPOLITAN BISHOPS CONFERENCE) TO SHOW SUPPORT FOR PORTUGUESE EPISCOPATE IN RADIO RENASCENCA CASE. BISHOP WELCOMED DEMONSTRATORS' EXAMPLE, CALLING ON "SLUMBERING" CHRISTIANS FROM NORTH TO ALGARVE TO EMULATE IT.

4. FLANK REACTION - MRPP THORN DRAWS BLOOD: STUNG BY ESCAPE OF MRPP LEADER ARNALDO MATOS FROM MILITARY HOSPITAL,

COPCON ISSUED STATEMENT JULY 14 ATTEMPTING SET RECORD STRAIGHT ON AFM'S RELATIONS WITH, AND ATTITUDE TOWARD, THIS FAR LEFT GROUP. DEFENSIVE IN TONE, COMMUNIQUE ATTEMPTED JUSTIFY COPCON'S MAY 28 COORDINATED NATIONAL ROUNDUP OF MRPP MEMBERS AND AUTHORITIES' SUBSEQUENT TREATMENT OF ARRESTEES. COMMUNIQUE EXPRESSED CHAGRIN AT ESCAPE EFFECTED JULY 11 BY MRPP SECRETARY GENERAL ARNALDO MATOS FROM PRISON HOSPITAL BUT SHED NO LIGHT ON CIRCUMSTANCES OF FLIGHT. STATEMENT ENDED ALMOST APOLOGETICALLY NOTING THAT ONLY 27 OF ORIGINAL 432 MRPP MILITANTS ARRESTED REMAIN IN CUSTODY.

5. TENSIONS REMAIN HIGH: PPD LIKELY DEPARTURE FROM GOVERNMENT ON JULY 16 (REF C) PROBABLY ACCOUNTS FOR POST-PONEMENT TO JULY 18 OF AFM GENERAL ASSEMBLY ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED FOR JULY 16. DETERIORATING SITUATION IN ANGOLA, PARTICULARLY THREAT TO WHITE POPULATION THERE, HAS ADDED TO TENSIONS HERE (REF B).

6. COMMENT: POLITICAL COMMITTEE'S PERFORMANCE IS ONE MORE EPISODE IN AFM'S INSTITUTIONAL TOING-AND-FROING BETWEEN "PROGRESSIVE" AND "PLURALIST" PATHS FOR PORTUGUESE REVOLUTION. FAR FROM CONCILIATING DIVERGING CAMPS, AFM'S INDECISIVENESS CONTRIBUTES TO POLARIZATION PROCESS AND KEEPS TENSIONS HIGH.  
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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** GOVERNMENT REFORM, POLITICAL SITUATION  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 14 JUL 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** CunninFX  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1975LISBON03974  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D750242-1070  
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**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
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**Legacy Key:** link1975/newtext/t19750759/aaaacaqa.tel  
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**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 75 LISBON 3937, 75 LISBON 3972, 75 LISBON 3951  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** CunninFX  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 20 MAY 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <20 MAY 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <02 OCT 2003 by CunninFX>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
06 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** POLITICAL TENSIONS REMAIN HIGH  
**TAGS:** PINT, PO  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006